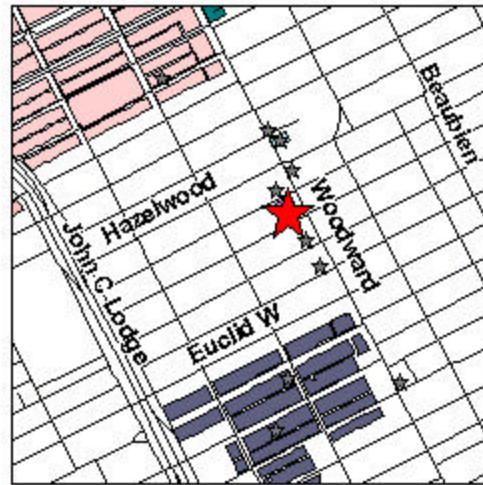


St. John C.M.E. Church

8715 Woodward Avenue and a terrace of nine row houses at Woodward and Gladstone.

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St. John C.M.E.

Historic overview:

The church building located at the corner of Woodward and Blaine Avenue is the current home of St. John CME Church. The congregation belonging to St. John CME started with the migration of rural blacks from the south, which wanted to separate themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church of the south. In 1870 the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church was established. This group was different from the African Methodist Episcopal Church who had established themselves in the north earlier. Today they are known as the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church because of the changing times but are still known by their initials “C. M.E.”.

The mission started in the home of Rev. O.L. Mitchell but quickly acquired a building of their own as the Bishop of the C. M. E. Conference came to Detroit in July of 1917 to establish a C. M. E. Church, the first in Detroit. Their first home was a brick church built in 1883 and the original home of the First German Evangelical Association Church. Membership grew with a new pastor, Rev. W. M. Crain, who had a reputation for preaching. In November of 1918 the church bought St. Marks English Evangelical Lutheran Church and the congregation remained for more than 35 years. This building was a classical wooded building with a column portico built in 1899. St. John CME served its community as a distribution center for food during the depression. In 1944 the congregation grew and improvements were made on the church. In 1955 Rev Amos brought the congregation to its present located and becoming the first Black congregation to be established in the “Piety Hill”. Today the church continues to commit to the community.

The buildings of the church complex are made up of three connecting structures, the chapel 1902 & 1907, the sanctuary 1911 and the church house addition in 1929. The buildings were built of red brick with limestone trim and a gray slate roof. The building has a Neo-Gothic appearance with Prairie and Arts & Crafts influence. The site also includes 9 row houses along the Gladstone Avenue boundary of the district.

